# Changing Homeland Security: Ten Essential Homeland Security Books

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This article presents what I consider to be ten essential homeland security books. The list is personal and provisional. The discipline is too new to have a canon. We need to continuously examine what is signal and what is background noise in homeland security's academic environment.

Much has been written about homeland security. A lot more is in the publishing pipeline. My list includes books I find myself returning to as I seek to understand contemporary homeland security events. Beyond personal interest, I believe they form a foundation for a growing understanding of the parameters of what it means to study homeland security as a professional discipline. Other books – and important articles – could be added, but ten is sufficient to start.

These books are:

- *The Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States: 9/11 Commission Report* (2004)
- *The National Strategy for Homeland Security* (2002)
- *After: How America Confronted the September 12 Era* (2003)
- *Imperial Hubris: Why the West is Losing the War on Terror* (2004)
- *America the Vulnerable: How Our Government is Failing to Protect Us From Terrorism* (2004)
- *Homeland Security: A Complete Guide to Understanding, Preventing, and Surviving Terrorism* (2005)
- *Catastrophe Preparation and Prevention for Law Enforcement Professionals* (2008)
- *Trapped in the War on Terror* (2006)
- *Unconquerable Nation: Knowing Our Enemy; Strengthening Ourselves* (2006)
- *The Declaration of Independence* (1776), *The Articles of Confederation* (1777), and *The Constitution of the United States of America* (1787)

Taken together, these works outline a broad historical narrative about homeland security. We were attacked. We quickly developed a strategy to make sure we prevented future attacks. We tried to come to terms with what happened to us as a nation. Next, textbooks and workbooks aiming to systematize homeland security ideas started to appear. Homeland security took the first steps toward becoming institutionalized. Then came the criticism of how we perceived the enemy and what we were doing – or not

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doing – to protect the homeland. Recently, some people maintain we have significantly overreacted to the threat and are now "trapped" in a War on Terror that accomplishes little, wastes resources and threatens our national values. Others urge government to focus resources on threats that have the potential to cause us the greatest damage and to encourage communities to become resilient. The American people must be willing to accept some level of risk. While there is a threat of attack by terrorists, there is a bigger danger that how we react will do more damage than the attack. As one of the authors cited later in this essay wrote: "Instead of surrendering our liberties in the name of security, we must embrace liberty as the source and sustenance of our security." Homeland security gets better through the open exchange of competing and contrasting ideas. Keeping this essential debate open and free helps ensure we will remain an "Unconquerable Nation."

## *The Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States: 9/11 Commission Report*[1]

Not many government reports are literary enough to be nominated for the National Book Award. The *9/11 Report* was.[2] The *Report* chronicles the events that led to a perceived need for something called homeland security. It provides an analysis of why we were attacked and why the attack succeeded. It outlines what the nation needs to do to reduce the chances that we will be unprepared for another attack. It provides continually relevant benchmarks against which to assess the status of efforts to protect the nation from terrorism.

The book begins with a prosaically clinical retelling of what happened on a day that "dawned temperate and nearly cloudless in the Eastern United States." [1] Chapter One ends with a quote from an unknown NORAD member who observes "This is a new type of war."

In an extended flashback, the authors use Chapters Two through Eight to discuss the foundations of this new type of war. They focus on the origins and rise of Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda. They detail how al Qaeda prepared for the attack. They present the reader with a portrait of the enemy as "sophisticated, patient, disciplined, and lethal." It is the chilling image that persists today. The nation continues to struggle to understand who the enemy is and what it wants.

The report describes how

> [T]he institutions charged with protecting our borders, civil aviation, and national security did not understand how grave this threat could be, and did not adjust their policies, plans and practices to deter or defeat it. We learned of fault lines within our government – between foreign and domestic intelligence, and between and within agencies. We learned of the pervasive problems of managing and sharing information across a large and unwieldy government that had been built in a different era to confront different dangers. [xvii]

According to the Report Card issued by the vestiges of the 911 Commission and to the "First 100 Days" agenda of the 110th Congress, many of those institutional problems persist.

The *9/11 Report* concludes the attack happened because of the failure of imagination, policy, capabilities, and management. It is interesting (although understandable from a political perspective) that the Commission chose to focus on the failure of "management" rather than "leadership." Usually when big things go wrong leaders, not managers, are responsible. The Commission avoided making a judgment about how and which leaders failed.

The *9/11 Report* tetrad creates a framework for assessing preparedness: Do we have the right policies? Do we have the capabilities to execute those policies? Do we have the appropriate leadership in homeland security? Do we encourage and use imagination where it can do the most good?

Homeland security efforts since the *Report* was published have focused primarily on improving response capabilities and on policy. Much less emphasis has been placed on what it means to be an effective homeland security leader, or on systematically developing those leaders. It is unclear how to – or whether we should – institutionalize imagination. There continues to be more basic homeland security work to do than anyone, including contractors, has time to do well. One can barely wonder what a more imaginative workload would look like. On the other hand, there is a growing view (discussed later in this essay) that perhaps we have become more imaginative about the terrorist threat than is warranted by the empirical evidence.

The 9/11 report was criticized almost the same day it was released.[3] But the report – along with the transcripts and audio and video recordings of the testimony that contributed to the Commission's findings – will remain a historically important artifact as long as homeland security remains a function of government. The *9/11 Report* is essential because it reminds us what life was like before and on that singular Tuesday in September.

## *The National Strategy for Homeland Security*[4]

*The National Strategy for Homeland Security* is one of the first comprehensive efforts to describe a domestic public policy strategy. Formal strategy documents are routine in the Department of Defense and national security world. They are less prevalent in the domestic policy arena.

There are extensive debates about what a strategy is.[5] I find it useful to consider strategy as both intentional and emergent.[6] *The National Strategy for Homeland Security* is intentional. We were attacked. We had to respond. What should we do? One approach would be simply to have individual agencies decide what to do, then coordinate that effort through the usual government mechanisms. Another way is to coordinate

those efforts within a unified design. That is what the *National Strategy* intends to do.

The *Strategy* is paved with good intentions. But in my experience it is rarely referred to outside a relatively small circle of people and agencies. When it was first released it was criticized as less of a strategy and more a huge to-do list. One critic said it had more activities than his daughter's summer camp. A primary author of the *Strategy* responded that while that was an amusing debate point, "what I haven't heard is anyone say that we missed anything and I haven't heard anyone say that any of the 84 [activities in the Strategy] don't matter."[7]

The *Strategy* is a "theory for how we're going to cause security for ourselves."[8] It aims to address four basic, and complex, questions: What is homeland security and what are its missions? What are we trying to accomplish and what are the most important goals? What is the national government doing now to achieve those goals and what should they be doing? What should state, local, tribal, private sector entities, and citizens do to help make the nation secure?

One definition of "strategy" says that it is the bridge between policy and operations.[9] Clearly, this document is not that kind of strategy. There is no one place to go to find *the* national homeland security policy. Instead, the nation's homeland security policy has to be constructed retrospectively by aggregating laws, presidential directives, grant guidance, and other regulatory documents. The *National Strategy* is better seen as a Grand Strategy. It is "a high level statement of what we're trying to do."[10]

One wonders what the relationship is between the strategy that is outlined in this document and the strategy that has emerged over the last few years. For example, the official definition of homeland security says "Homeland Security is a concerted national effort to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States, reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism, and minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur." [2]. These are straight forward words. Homeland Security is about terrorism. The first strategic objective is to prevent terrorism. If it were not for terrorism, there would be no large-scale government activity called Homeland Security. There is nothing in the definition, and precious little in the strategy (maybe 5 percent), about all hazards, natural disasters, or pandemics.

One should not be so doctrinaire to think that a written strategy is or should be the primary driver of government's behavior. The world did not stop after 9/11. Katrina demonstrated gaps in our response capabilities. Avian flu raised the specter of the 1918 pandemic and called attention to the inadequacies of our public health and medical care system. The real homeland security strategy that emerges in parallel with the written *National Strategy* seems to change priorities according to whatever the last disaster was or the next credible catastrophe might be. That is a reminder that what government does is shaped more by politics than paper.

The official *Strategy* does a number of structural things well. It describes – at the 50,000 foot level – the threats and where we are vulnerable to those threats. It outlines how the nation is organized to meet those threats, reminding readers of the role of federalism. It identifies six mission areas which, in July 2002, seemed especially critical: intelligence, border and transportation security, domestic counterterrorism, critical infrastructure, catastrophic threats, and emergency response. Five years later these issues still represent sources of national distress.

The strategy describes what it terms four foundations that cut across all the mission areas: law, science and technology, information sharing, and international cooperation. It believes these foundations can be used as the basis for deciding where to invest resources. One could argue whether these are foundations, other mission areas, or the framework for the homeland security industrial complex. But they add to the effort to provide a comprehensive conceptual look at what it will take to prevent and respond to the next attack.

A useful strategy describes ends, ways, and means. *The National Strategy* does pay some attention to the costs of homeland security. It notes we spend (as of 2002) roughly $100 billion a year on homeland security. It asserts that "as a Nation we will spend whatever is necessary to secure the homeland." [63] There is no evidence given to support the $100 billion a year figure. Unless I missed it somewhere, there is no authoritative accounting anywhere of just how much homeland security costs the nation. There is little incentive to know. There is no mechanism – except perhaps Congress – for discovering. There is no agreed upon set of categories to establish what even counts as homeland security spending.

The *National Strategy for Homeland Security* is showing its age. There is a glaring gap between the strategy's emphasis on prevention and the financial and political support for response. According to the *Strategy*, homeland security is supposed to be almost exclusively about terrorism. Congressional hearings, budgets, assessments, and documents suggest homeland security increasingly is about all hazards.

The *National Strategy* anticipates that it will be "adjusted and amended" over time. It is now appropriate that the nation develop a new strategy, based on the lessons we ought to have learned over the past five years. This should be one of the first items of business for a new congress and a new administration. But there is nothing that says a national strategy has to come from the central government. The National Governors Association, the National Homeland Security Consortium, National League of Cities, among others, are just as capable of initiating overall direction for the nation, especially in a networked world.

While some of what is in the current *Strategy* should be changed, other elements should be carried over to version 2.0 – if not in specifics, at least in philosophy. For example, there are eight principles that guided the design of the first *National Strategy*:

- Require responsibility and accountability,
- Mobilize the entire nation,
- Manage risks and allocate resources judiciously,
- Seek opportunities out of the adversity created by having to pay attention to terrorism,
- Foster flexibility in the nation's homeland security programs,
- Measure preparedness,
- Sustain preparedness, and
- Constrain government spending.

These may not be the only or the best principles to inform a national strategy. But they are worth considering for future iterations.

For now, however, we work with the strategy we have. *The National Strategy for Homeland Security* is clear enough to say where we should be going, and flexible enough to encourage the nation to consider what it means to have an effective strategy.

### ***After: How American Confronted the September 12 Era*, by Steven Brill[11]**

Here is the narrative so far: the nation was cruising along as the world's only super power. There were distant threats, but for the most part we were on top of history. All that was left was for everyone to get rich. Then we were attacked by an enemy who had been at war with us for at least twenty years. This time they got our full attention. We developed a strategy for dealing with the enemy, and in the process began to reshape the nature of our government, its relationship to the world, and its relationship to its people.

Steven Brill captures what happened during the period from September 12, 2001 to January 2003. In a brief prologue he introduces the main characters in his story and what they were doing on September 11th. Part One, called "Climbing Back," covers the period from September 12 through October 12, the first frightening and numbing month after the attack. Part Two, "New Routines, New Systems" describes October 15, 2001 to December 31, 2001. Part Three covers January 2 through June 10, 2002, a period of "Short Term Pain and Gain, Long Term Plans." Part Four, "Coming to Terms With The New Era" describes the period of June 12 through September 11, 2002. The Epilogue closes the narrative in January 2003.

The story unfolds through the experiences of people. A customs inspector has to deal with how to make sure there is no nuclear bomb in his port. A California businessman who produces luggage screening devices sees the event as both a tragedy and as a business opportunity.

There is a sharp contrast between Attorney General Ashcroft – who wants to make sure nothing like this happens again and who authorizes the questioning and detaining of hundreds and maybe thousands of people – and the recently hired executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union, who tries to hold back efforts he perceives will corrode civil liberties. The chief executive of a major insurance company has to decide whether his company will pay or avoid insurance damages. The Red Cross director has to figure out how to collect and distribute unprecedented donations, and at the same time avoid attacks by her board of directors. A small business man – the owner of a shoe repair business – has to rebuild his business. A border patrol agent speaks publicly about his section of unprotected border and faces practically unending efforts by the bureaucracy to fire him.

While all this is going on, Tom Ridge and a very small group of people develop first an Office of Homeland Security and then a Department of Homeland Security. There are many remarkable stories in this 700 page book. The best one – for those with an interest in homeland security politics – may be the story of how Ridge and his group encounter bureaucratic, political, and other barriers while trying to create a new way of doing business in the executive and congressional branches.

Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge was in a relative's hospital room when the planes attacked. A few days later he was selected to run the White House-based Office of Homeland Security and carry out a strategy that required coordinating other executive branch agencies. Brill describes the massive problems Ridge faced getting agencies to think beyond their organizational province. Ridge's relationship to those agencies changed after he was named to head the new Department of Homeland Security.

But from his first days in Washington, having to respond to the threat of the day – from anthrax attacks to problems with unsecured manhole covers – created an environment that gave Ridge and his staff little opportunity to think deliberately and comprehensively about what needed to be done. One early member of DHS described the pace as "having to fly a plane while you're still building it."[12] Brill illustrates how intention and happenstance combined to create that environment, one that continues to challenge the department.

This collection of stories is essential to understanding homeland security's early days – not just the Department of Homeland Security, but the complexity that faced the nation and its leaders after the attack. It is a truism that those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it. It has also been said that "those who remember the past are condemned to making the opposite mistake."[13] There is no way to operate with authority in the homeland security world without risking mistakes. Brill's book reminds the reader of the forces well-intentioned people encounter. Significant decisions have to be made in the absence of information; individual and organizational risks have to be taken. Politics, career issues, economics, networks, personal flaws, personal courage, and organizational

processes shaped what happened in the days after 9/11. The same dynamics continue to shape what we do today. I do not know a better book for describing those dynamics.

### *Imperial Hubris: Why The West Is Losing The War on Terror*, Michael Scheuer, writing as Anonymous.[14]

"If you know the enemy and know yourself," Sun Tzu advised centuries ago, "you need not fear the results of a hundred battles." Michael Scheuer argues we are losing the war on terror because we fundamentally misunderstand the enemy and what it wants. This is a war that "has the potential to last beyond our children's lifetimes and to be fought mostly on U.S. soil." [xi]

If you ask people who our enemy is you are likely to get the answer "terrorists." If you press, you will get the name al Qaeda. If you push further and ask what the enemy wants, you may get something like, "they hate us for our freedom and they want to destroy our civilization and our culture."

Michael Scheuer was one of the first people to argue that they – radical Muslim terrorists – do not hate us for our freedoms; they hate our policies. His writing calls attention to our lack of substantive knowledge about "the enemy" and what they want. As a former CIA analyst, Scheuer spent twenty-two years in the intelligence community, eight of those years studying al Qaeda. For Scheuer, the nation's initial homeland security strategy was based on faulty assumptions. In his view, we are fighting a worldwide battle against Muslim fundamentalists – not criminals or terrorists.

Bin Laden, as surrogate for the broader presumed clash of Muslim and Judeo-Christian civilizations, has been very clear about his foreign policy goals: the end to the Jewish state, the withdrawal of all U.S. and western military forces from the Arabian Peninsula, the end of all U.S. involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, the end of U.S. support for governments that oppress Muslims, full Muslim control over the Islamic world's energy resources, and replacing U.S. backed Muslim regimes with governments that rule according to Islamic law. [210]

Scheuer writes that al Qaeda will attack the nation again; the next assault will involve weapons of mass destruction and be larger than the 9/11 attack. He wrote *Imperial Hubris* to show "there has never been a shortage of knowledge about the nature and immediacy of the...threat, but only a lack of courage to tell the truth about it fully, openly, and with disregard for the career-related consequences of truth telling." [xii]

I included this book in my list of essentials because it challenges orthodoxy. Specifically it challenges one-dimensional thinking about the enemy. More generally it demonstrates important tenants of critical thinking: identify core assumptions, subject the assumptions to data- and value-based analysis and evaluation, and offer conclusions that can be

further exposed to critical analysis. Significant parts of homeland security involve learning while one is doing. Effective learning requires not only critical thinking, but the personal and organizational courage to challenge conventional wisdom. *Imperial Hubris* demonstrates how that can be done.

Scheuer no longer works for the Central Intelligence Agency.

### *America The Vulnerable*, by Stephen Flynn[15]

"America remains dangerously unprepared to prevent and respond to a catastrophic terrorist attack on U.S. soil." [iv] Steven Flynn opens his 2004 book – *America The Vulnerable: How Our Government is Failing To Protect Us From Terrorism* – with those words. Michael Scheuer criticized the conventional understanding of the enemy. Flynn provides one of the first measured critiques of the nation's strategic, policy, and organizational response to September 11th. "If September 11, 2001, was a wake up call, clearly America has fallen back asleep," he writes.

Flynn was one of a small group who had a sense, before 9/11, of our nation's vulnerability to attacks. Flynn, like others who tried to get government to take the threat seriously, discovered that "Americans need a crisis to act. Nothing will change until we have a serious act of terrorism on U.S. soil." [xii] Flynn argues that after we were attacked, the nation reacted in a haphazard way, imposing poorly conceived security programs in an effort to do something – anything – to reassure the American public. His thesis in *America the Vulnerable* (amplified in his 2007 book *The Edge of Disaster*[16]) is that the nation remains unprepared for the next attack. In his view, the war on terror relies primarily on overseas military activities. The homeland has not been mobilized to confront the threat – whatever it might be. "Terrorism is a threat that we must constantly combat if we are to reduce it to manageable levels so that we can live lives free of fear." [xiii]

He outlines three "simplistic" positions offered in response to the attacks: security at any cost (whose advocates say we should pay any price to prevent terrorism on our soil); a Libertarian "cure is worse than the disease" school that does not want to impose any restrictions on the lives of individuals or the market (if we do, the terrorists have already won); or what he calls the "Go to the Source" approach – which he believes is the prevailing foundation for the war on terror. [10-11]

Flynn's primary caution is that al Qaeda has already demonstrated an ability to establish operations in the United States. They will do it again. Hence his emphasis on establishing a strong homeland security program. Flynn constructs a scenario of a simultaneous dirty bomb attack in New York, Michigan, New Jersey, Los Angeles, and Miami. He uses the scenario to "lament the fact that America has not spent its yesterdays preparing for the tomorrows that now confront the nation." [35] He believes we are in a "phony war," equivalent to the eight months after September 1939 when

the British and French declared war on Germany. Not much happened. Then the storm arrived. We wait for that storm today.

Flynn argues that as a people we do not yet have the maturity to live with the risks of future attacks and take reasonable precautions to manage risks. He devotes the middle part of his book to surveying the nation's most significant vulnerabilities – vulnerabilities which persist today. He notes that a government-only solution (i.e., DHS) fails to incorporate the involvement of citizens and the private sector. He then presents the audacious idea of replacing the current DHS-oriented national system with a Federal Security Reserve System, based on the political and organizational protocols of the Federal Reserve System (originally suggested by Ralph Lerner and extended by Flynn).[17] It is, to the best of my knowledge, the only significant alternative presented to the existing, not very carefully thought through, structure of the current homeland security system.

In our incremental society, the idea has practically no chance of becoming practice. DHS is going through its third reorganization in four years. There is little stomach for eliminating the department. But if we are attacked again; if the DHS system is found wanting; and if a new president, a new congress, and angry citizens say "Get us something different!" – then, perhaps, change will occur. For now, Flynn has few takers for the Federal Security Reserve System. It remains in the wings as a first class – and rare – example of a "big" homeland security idea.

Flynn takes a stab at answering probably the most difficult question in homeland security: how much security is enough? "We have done enough when the American people can conclude that a future attack on U.S. soil will be an exceptional event that does not require wholesale changes to how we go about our lives. This means they should be confident that the measures in place are sufficient to confront the danger." [164] He closes the book describing seven principles he believes will help us arrive at that end.

- There is no such thing as fail-safe security, and any attempt to achieve it will be counter productive.
- Security must always be a work in progress.
- Homeland Security requires forging and sustaining new partnerships at home and abroad.
- Our federalist system of government is a major asset.
- Emergency preparedness can save lives and significantly reduce the consequences of terrorist attacks.
- Homeland Security activities have deterrence value.
- Homeland Security activities will have derivative benefits for other public and private goods. [165-168]

Flynn's book is a mixture of evidence, interpretation, analysis, and opinion. He acknowledges that the book does not benefit from the kind of cautious study that characterizes traditional scholarship. It takes time and resources to do quality research. The homeland security research agenda is just getting started. Flynn acknowledges homeland security will benefit from the scholarly perspective that the passage of time will provide. But he believes time is not on our side.

Flynn models the role reflective practitioners can play in the development of homeland security's intellectual topography. His work is a harbinger that some of the best research in this emerging field will be done by the people who do homeland security work and who are grounded in the requirements of academic argument – whether positivists, constructionists, subjectivists, or of other methodological predispositions. All that is asked is that they present their ideas in a clear fashion, identify their assumptions and conclusions, and provide evidence that, if not convincing, is at least suggestive and supportive of the conclusions they reach. *American the Vulnerable* meets that test.

### ***Homeland Security: A Complete Guide to Understanding, Preventing and Surviving Terrorism,*** **by Mark Sauter and James Carafano**

One builds a professional discipline by developing a body of knowledge that evolves through research, practice and instruction. It is an open question whether homeland security will become a unique professional discipline, a specialization area for other professions, or turn into something presently unknown. The appearance of textbooks is one sign that a profession may be emerging. Mark Sauter and James Carafano are the authors of what I consider to be the best of a small batch of homeland security textbooks: *Homeland Security: A Complete Guide to Understanding, Preventing, and Surviving Terrorism*.[18]

The almost 500 page book is not a "complete" guide. No work can be complete in this evolving enterprise. The book was written before Katrina, before the rise of pandemic flu concerns, and before the Second Stage (and now third stage) organizational changes. So there are dated parts of the text, such as: "The Department has four major directorates: Border and Transportation Security, Emergency Preparedness and Response; Science and Technology; and Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection." [217] Such problems are inevitable.

The book is intended to be "a text for both academic and training courses in homeland security and terrorism." My sense is the book will be more useful for training programs and introductory undergraduate courses than for a graduate school audience. But anyone looking for a 30,000 foot view of what constitutes homeland security can benefit from spending time with it.

The book is primarily descriptive rather than evaluative. The authors write that the content is designed to support the (unspecified) "learning objectives established by the programs and guidelines of the Department of Homeland Security and the United States Citizens Corps." [xvii] I have searched unsuccessfully for those learning objectives. I presume they exist; I just cannot locate them.

The authors quickly dismiss any potential conflict over the scope of homeland security by pragmatically noting: "The U.S. government defines homeland security as the domestic effort…to defend America from terrorists. In practice, homeland security efforts have also come to comprise general preparedness under the all-hazards doctrine…." [xiv] Not a lot of academic parsing of ideas here; just a straight forward, "Here are the initial conditions; we can argue details later."

The book is extremely well organized for an undergraduate class in homeland security. Each of the eighteen chapters follows the same format: an overview of the chapter, the learning objectives, the content, a summary of the content, a brief quiz that can also be used as discussion questions, and references. The chapters, generally more broad than deep, introduce readers to most of the topics that can be said to constitute a strict constructionist view of homeland security – i.e., homeland security is about terrorism. The helpfully descriptive chapter titles give one a sense of the breadth of the book:

Part 1 – How We Got Here From There: The Emergence of Modern Homeland Security
- Homeland Security: The American Tradition
- The Rise of Modern Terrorism: The Road to 9/11
- The Birth of Modern Homeland Security: The National Response to the 9/11 Attacks

Part 2 – Understanding Terrorism
- The Mind of the Terrorist: Why They Hate Us
- Al-Qaeda and Other Islamic Extremist Groups: Understanding Fanaticism in the Name of Religion
- The Transnational Dimensions of Terrorism: The Unique Dangers of the Twenty-First Century
- Domestic Terrorist Groups: The Forgotten Threat
- Terrorist Operations and Tactics: How Attacks are Planned and Executed
- Weapons of Mass Destruction: Understanding the Great Terrorist Threats and Getting Beyond the Hype
- The Digital Battlefield: Cyberterrorism and Cybersecurity

Part 3 – Homeland Security: Organization, Strategies, Programs, and Principles
- Homeland Security Roles, Responsibilities, and Jurisdictions: Federal, State and Local Government Responsibilities

- America's National Strategies: The Plans Driving the War on Global Terrorism and What They Mean
- Domestic Antiterrorism and Counterterrorism: The New Role for States and Localities and Supporting Law Enforcement Agencies
- Critical Infrastructure Protection and Key Assets: Protecting America's Most Important Targets
- Incident Management and Emergency Management: Preparing For When Prevention Fails
- Business Preparedness, Continuity, and Recovery: Private Sector Responses to Terrorism
- Public Awareness and Personal and Family Preparedness: Simple Solutions, Serious Challenges
- The Future of Homeland Security: Adapting and Responding to the Evolving Terrorist Threat While Balancing Safety and Civil Liberties

Appendices

- Profile of Significant Islamic Extremist and International Terrorist Groups and State Sponsors
- Volunteer Services
- The Media and Issues for Homeland Security
- Medical and Public Health Services Emergency and Disaster Planning and Response: Public Health and Medical Organizations Have Unique and Demanding Responsibilities for Preparing and Responding to Terrorist Attacks
- Preparing and Responding to Threats Against the Agriculture Sector

The book can be criticized on several grounds. It is largely federal centric, and downplays the role of state and locals in intelligence and other homeland security domains; as described above, some of its content has been overtaken by events – changes in catastrophic planning, changes in the intelligence community, and so on. It could be significantly more critical of existing homeland security orthodoxy, or at least present some conflicting perspectives. It would benefit from a bibliography. There could be links to more current on-line material. But praise for this book should be louder than disdain. Parts I and II have lasting value. It is friendly to students and teachers. It covers a lot of ground.

As yet there is no standard homeland security text book. One day there will be. I consider the Sauter and Carafano book essential because it illustrates what a good introductory homeland security textbook should have: broad coverage to show the scope of the field, clear and informative writing, specific learning objectives, and activities that can be used to determine whether those objectives have been achieved.

The essential character of this book rests not so much in its content but in its structure and presentation. There may be better introductory textbooks in the future. This is the one they will have to surpass.

### *Catastrophe, Preparation and Prevention for Law Enforcement Professionals*, by Craig Baldwin, Larry Irons, and Philip Palin[19]

The previously mentioned book is for people who want to understand the issues and ideas in homeland security. *Catastrophe, Preparation and Prevention* is intended more for people who want to know what to do with those ideas. The book (workbook, actually) is designed for practitioners, especially those at state and local levels. While this book is written primarily for law enforcement, it would be useful for practically any public safety first responder who has some homeland security involvement. It is, according to the material in the book, the first in a series of similar workbooks for fire services, emergency medical, and others.

Prevention is the first priority of the national strategy for homeland security. But what does one do when one is preventing terrorism? As of yet, there is no national strategy for prevention, unlike the ones for response or for protecting critical infrastructure. This book describes a set of principles that can be used to prevent or mitigate a catastrophic attack in one's community. The workbook is based on a prevention model first developed by DHS in its 2003 prevention guidelines.[20] The model was derived inductively by asking first responders what they do when they prevent certain kinds of terrorist attacks. The research generated five general prevention areas: identifying threats, sharing information, collaborating with others, managing risks, and then intervening.

Building on this model, the 150 page workbook seeks to teach police officers the basics of prevention. The book is visually appealing; its content is part theory, part practice, and part fill-in-the-blanks with one's own experiences. The book comes with a compact disk that contains dozens of homeland security documents.

The book is also linked to an on-line exercise where the reader gets the opportunity to test his or her skill in relation to what is taught in the book. For example, after completing the unit on recognizing threats, the reader is directed to the exercise with the following directions:

> It is now 9 months before a planned terrorist attack. The threat is organizing, planning and becoming real. Can you identify the most probable targets [in the fictional community used in the exercise] and their vulnerabilities based on the perceived threat? ....Your efforts to collaborate and share information are paying off. You are receiving information from local, federal and international law enforcement agencies. But, even with this information, you must make threat and vulnerability choices. [46]

After the chapter on risk management, the exercise progresses: "It is now about 3 months before the attack.... You and your team are ready to identify and assess the risks associated with this threat.... Three... lieutenants will present their risk management strategies. Can you correctly identify their strength and weaknesses?" [116]

It all sounds a bit contrived, but from a learning perspective it seems to work. I went through the on-line exercise and learned something about prevention.

(Disclosure: I participated on a review board for McGraw Hill when it was considering whether to undertake this workbook, and I participated in helping to develop one of the concepts used in the workbook. A company I have a relationship with has the potential to benefit financially, in a minor way, from sales of the workbook. These facts normally should exclude someone – in this case me – from writing a review about the book. In spite of that, I still think this workbook demonstrates an important blended learning approach to practitioner-oriented homeland security education.)

One can disagree with some of the conceptual choices made by the authors – in their framing of the prevention equation, for example, or in their focus on terrorism rather than all hazards. I disagree with their use of "decide to intervene" rather than "intervene." But I think this book is essential in the way it approaches practitioner learning. Documents from the national strategy on down, and leaders from the president on down, have talked about prevention as the first priority in securing the homeland. This workbook is the only book I know that treats that priority in a serious and operationally useful way. In doing so, it sets a mark that future efforts to teach practitioners will have to reach.

### *Trapped in the War on Terror*, by Ian S. Lustick

The War on Terror itself, not al Qaeda or its offshoots, "has become the primary threat to the well-being of Americans in the first decade of the twenty-first century. My fundamental conclusion is that the War on Terror is vastly out of proportion to the actual problems we face from terrorists and terrorists groups." [6] *Trapped in the War on Terror*[21] details how Ian Lustick reached this conclusion. He asserts:

> The War on Terror's record of failure, with its inevitable and spectacular instances of venality and waste, will humiliate thousands of public servants and elected officials, demoralize citizens, and enrage taxpayers. The effort to master the unlimited catastrophes we can imagine by mobilizing the scarce resources we actually have will drain our economy, divert and distort military, intelligence, and law enforcement resources, undermine faith in our institutions, and fundamentally disturb our way of life. In this way the terrorists who struck us so hard on September 11, 2001, can use our own defensive efforts to do us much greater harm than they could ever do themselves. [ix-x]

It takes Lustick 145 pages to unfurl compelling – if occasionally polemical and not always thoroughly convincing – evidence to support his assertion. He begins by describing the role triage ought to play in deciding how to use scarce homeland security resources. "If we do not systematically evaluate threats, we will end up worrying about all conceivable

vulnerabilities. By this logic, our resources will be the only limit to investments in our security, leading to a frenzy of impossibly huge outlays." [3]

Lustick argues we do not have an effective way to determine which potential threats are serious enough to attend to. What he calls an "all-azimuth threat of terrorism" makes it difficult to reject rationally any suggestion for being better prepared. There is always something more one can do to prevent or get ready for an attack. One is always open to criticism after the fact if one knew about a potential threat yet did nothing about it. He offers a more conspiratorial explanation that the all-azimuth vision results from the "paranoia unleashed after the 9/11 attacks" that is being exploited by certain special interest groups and individuals. The latter explanation constitutes a significant part of his argument (as Lustick's essay elsewhere in this issue outlines). The bulk of the book is a well structured argument that looks at the causes and consequences of the homeland security world he sees. He closes his analysis with seven ideas he thinks can "free Americans from the War on Terror."

Chapter 2, "Perceptions of the Terrorist Threat" discusses what Americans believe about the threat of terrorism and why they hold those beliefs. Chapter 3 looks at the evidence of the supposed threat. Lustick concludes that there is "very little evidence, hard or soft, that 'terrorist groups with global reach' are operating in the United States with plans to use deadly force either catastrophically or non-catastrophically in attacks against American targets." [29] Lustick does not contend there is no threat [46]. He argues the threat is – in the words of another book that makes a similar point – "overblown." [22]

Lustick uses Chapter 4 to explain why the War on Terror is out of hand.

> The array of slogans, bureaucracies, lobbying strategies, wars, budgets, contracts, books, television shows, films, cottage industries, and academic centers that makes up the War on Terror has come to operate as a self-organizing, self-perpetuating whirlwind – a veritable hurricane of public policies and private ambitions that feed on one another and on the impossibility of any outcome we could know as 'victory.' [48]

He blames the "actions of a very specific, energetic, well-organized, and well-positioned group" for transforming "the national response to the 9/11 attacks from a rational and direct action" against al Qaeda "to a crusade for the implementation of its own long-cherished blueprint for a new kind of America and a new kind of American role in the world." [49]

Chapter 5 describes the War on Terror Whirlwind. Lustick argues we are in what seems to be a permanent national emergency. We have been at threat level Yellow since the advisory system started; airports remain at Orange. The perceived emergency has engulfed the country in a whirlwind of homeland security activities, "none of which can ever be proven successful, but all of which can be criticized as inadequate." [71] He

contends "chasing dollars and grinding axes" drives the whirlwind. Organizations are more likely to receive government funding if they can frame their interests and mission within a homeland security context. District attorneys, veterinarians, the pharmaceutical industry, pediatricians, psychologists, pro-gun groups, anti-gun groups, airlines, unions, insurance companies, housing groups, and a growing list of other special interests assemble what they believe to be credible rationales for a nexus with homeland security.

How do we get free of this trap? Lustick's first recommendation is to know the enemy and then structure our response around that knowledge. "Our enemies are clever and they know more about us than we do about them," he argues. [140] "We must ask the same questions about al Qaeda and its ilk that we would ask about any other opponent." [125] Like Scheuer, he has his own understanding about the enemy, drawn mostly from what they say.

Once we know the enemy, what is to be done? Lustick closes his book with seven suggestions:

1. Open up a debate about the logic and appropriateness of the War on Terror. He notes that polls typically do not ask the American people whether we should have a War on Terrorism. He believes it will be difficult to get this conversation started.
2. Treat terrorists as "the dangerous but politically insignificant criminals they would be without our help." [137]
3. Treat terrorism fundamentally as a law enforcement problem; address the problem with "well-funded, sustained, disciplined, professional, aggressive, internationally cooperative...efforts employed to pursue, prosecute, and punish criminals." [139]
4. Work, long term, to build societies that are sufficiently satisfying and resilient to mitigate the growth of terrorism.
5. Establish levels of acceptable terrorism risks, using reasonable and cost effective measures to reduce unacceptable risks.
6. Learn to manage the fear terrorism seeks to create. "Stare straight into the face of the possibility that our country could be hit by a nuclear [or other catastrophic] terrorist attack," he says. [144] But "remember that we can and will recover from such a blow."[145]
7. "Choose the leaders we deserve, not only to escape the War on Terror trap but to protect ourselves from the real threats we face." [145]

Is Lustick correct? Have we created a self organizing monster that continues to grow and consume ever more resources? The Department of Homeland Security's budget is one of the few domestic policy budgets that are growing. Why is that? Is the threat so immediately malignant that we need to remain on full alert? Are our vulnerabilities so broad and

menacing that we need to continue spending regardless of the costs it imposes on policy domains not connected to homeland security? We have been at this homeland security business for more than five years. Lustick responsibly asks whether we are on the right path. People seriously thoughtful about the security of the American homeland need to engage his argument with equal care.

### *Unconquerable Nation*, by Brian Jenkins[23]

*Unconquerable Nation* combines into one volume some of homeland security's best writing, scholarship, history, critical thinking, pragmatism, personal opinion, and political acumen. The book draws its title – and its central analytical premise – from one of Sun Tzu's less well-known aphorisms: "Being unconquerable lies with yourself."

"Let us keep the threat in perspective," Jenkins argues (although not as zealously as Lustick). "We have in our history faced far worse threats. Our lives are not in grave danger. The republic is not in peril. We must not overreact." [177]

Like Scheuer, Flynn, and others, Jenkins argues that our strategy in the struggle against terrorism

> [M]ust be based on a thorough understanding of the enemy and of one's own strengths and weaknesses. 'Being unconquerable' means knowing oneself, but as understood by the ancient strategists, 'knowing' means much more than the mere acquisition of knowledge. 'Knowing oneself' means preserving one's spirit, a broad term. 'Being unconquerable' includes not only disciplined troops and strong walls, but also confidence, courage, commitment—the opposite of terror and fear. [5]

Jenkins – who has been involved in terrorism research for almost forty years – believes we can successfully defeat the threat of terrorism and preserve our liberty and our values. He argues that

> [T]oday's fierce partisanship has reduced national politics to a gang war. The constant maneuvering for narrow political advantage, the rejection of criticism as disloyalty, the pursuit by interest groups of their own exclusive agendas, and the radio, television, newspaper, and Internet debates that thrive on provocation and partisan zeal provide a poor platform for the difficult and sustained effort that America faces. All of these trends imperil the sense of community required to withstand the struggle ahead. We don't need unanimity. We do need unity. Democracy is our strength. Partisanship is our weakness. [17]

The book is about terrorists and homeland security. The first two chapters review the progress of the terrorism wars from the immediate post-9/11 days through current insurgent activities in Iraq.

> It is evident that this conflict will not be decided in the near future but will persist...for decades, during which setbacks will be

> obvious and progress will be hard to measure. Beyond al Qaeda, we confront a protracted ideological conflict, of which the terrorist campaign waged by disconnected jihadists is a symptom.... Preparing for this long war will require a deeper understanding of the challenge we confront and the formulation of a set of strategic principles to guide our actions. [51]

Identifying these principles for both the international and domestic fronts is the heart of Jenkins' book.

Chapter Three is another effort to "know the enemy." The terrorism debate is shaped on the one hand by seeing the enemy easily as evil people who hate our way of life and on the other by a more complex view of an enemy with clear foreign policy objectives. Jenkins writes, as did Scheuer and Lustick, "If you want to know what enemy leaders are thinking about, listen to what they have to say." [61]

Jenkins reviews some of the common misperceptions about the enemy, and then focuses on their words. One intriguing feature of the chapter is an analysis of the jihadist ideology and three generations of jihadist leaders. He concludes that

> [The jihadist] words are a narrative aimed at the home front, intended above all to incite action. They convey a message that has resonance and undeniable appeal. .... [T]he jihadists' actions are aimed at maintaining unity and attracting more recruits.... This fight will go on for a long time, especially if we fail to see it through their eyes. But once we do, we can formulate a new set of strategic principles better suited to the conflict. [109]

Another section especially worth reading is a hypothetical briefing given to Osama bin Laden about how al Qaeda and the jihad are doing, five years after the attack on American soil.

Chapter Four outlines the principles Jenkins suggests should govern our approach to this struggle. They include destroying the global jihadist enterprise, conserving resources for a decades long war, waging the political war against the jihadist ideology more effectively, breaking the cycle of jihadism, maintaining international cooperation, maintaining a narrower view of preemption, and reserving the right to retaliate (massively if necessary) in response to an attack.

Chapter Five presents the implications of Jenkins' argument for homeland security. The chapter opens with a unique photographic image of the Statue of Liberty and the torch she holds in her right hand. Under the picture are the words "The defense of democracy demands the defense of democracy's ideals."

Like Lustick, Jenkins asks: how did America become so afraid?

> Fear is the biggest danger we face. Fear can erode confidence in our institutions, provoke us to overreact, tempt us to abandon our values. There is nothing wrong with being afraid, but we have spent

> the past five years scaring the hell out of ourselves. We need to spend the next several years doing things very differently. [153]

His suggestions about what to do differently are not especially new. Yet they add to a growing perception that we know we can be doing better in homeland security. But the political will to make those changes happen has yet to emerge.

Jenkins recommends getting realistic about risk: "Since 9/11, most Americans have exaggerated the danger posed by terrorist attacks. This is because spectacular events, not statistics, drive our perceptions."[154] He adds his voice to those who want to get citizens more actively involved in preparedness activities:

> The federal government does not provide homeland security. Citizens do.... Security is a fundamental human right, but it should not become an individual entitlement. Americans are going to have to accept a measure of risk, even if the risk is minuscule, as we have seen. Yet the acceptance of risk should never become an excuse for negligence. [158]

Accomplishing this aim, as Jenkins describes it, will require more than an inadequately funded Citizen Corps.

His other recommendations include becoming more sophisticated about security, about what it can and cannot do; favoring security investments that help rebuild the nation's physical and social infrastructure; improving state and local intelligence capabilities; building a better legal framework to improve our ability to prevent attacks while respecting civil liberties; and ensuring effective judicial and legislative homeland security oversight.

Jenkins' final principle for redirecting homeland security efforts is to preserve American values. One often hears that the Constitution is not a suicide pact.[24] Jenkins confronts that concern:

> Maintaining our values may at times be inconvenient. It may mean, in some circumstances, accepting additional risks, but America has fought wars to defend what its citizens regard as inalienable rights. The country has faced dangers greater than all of the terrorists in the world put together. Neither the terrorists nor those who would promise us protection against terror should cause us to compromise our commitments. The current campaign against terrorism is a contest not only of strength and will, but also of conviction, commitment, and courage. It will ultimately determine who will live in fear. The choice, ultimately, is our own. I believe that we can win, and we can win right. [176]

The sentiment Jenkins expresses is essential to homeland security.

Jenkins argues that our most effective defense against terrorism will come from "our own virtue, our courage, our continued dedication to the ideals of a free society." [176] My final candidate for essential homeland security

work is a trinitarian reminder of what those ideals are: ***The Declaration of Independence, The Articles of Confederation,* and *The Constitution of the United States of America.***

The *Declaration of Independence* asserts, without providing footnotes, citations or other supporting evidence, that certain truths are self-evident: "that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness – That to secure these rights Governments are instituted among Men.... " But when government "becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

Our nation's roots spring from a revolution against illegitimate authority. But we have come a long way from Patrick Henry's "Give me liberty or give me death" to the unquestioning acceptance of "You are required to remove your shoes before you enter the walk-through metal detector."[25]

The *Declaration* reminds us that government's authority is derived from the consent of the governed. Governments take silence as consent. More people voted in 2006 for *American Idol* than have ever voted for a president.[26] The right combination of issue, incident, fear, and demagogue could radically alter the kind of nation we pass on to our children. If we perceive our safety is in jeopardy, we can change our laws. The rapid passage of the 300 plus page USA PATRIOT Act in 2001 – signed six weeks after the 9/11 attacks – demonstrated government can act quickly, more quickly than the Founders envisioned. New laws can enshrine new "self-evident" values.

I included the *Articles of Confederation And Perpetual Union* as a fundamental homeland security document because it reminds us that we did not get it right the first time we tried to form a government. We can make, acknowledge, and correct error.

The *Articles* were written during the war in 1776, adopted in 1777, and ratified by the states in 1781. This pact of Perpetual Union did not attend to the practical realities of financing and administering a nation. Instead of continually trying to modify the *Articles* until they got it right, the Founders had the political courage to start over again. The *Articles of Confederation* remind us that we should not exclude the possibility of rethinking, as a nation, how we approach homeland security. There are strong arguments to be made that the practice of homeland security is unnecessarily large and overly complex for the actual task we face. According to that perspective, expenditures are precariously out of balance with the threat. Our current confederation of homeland security activities risk – as bin Laden predicted in his October 2004 videotape – "continuing this policy in bleeding America to the point of bankruptcy." [27]

The *Constitution of the United States* – and the more than 200 year history of interpreting that document – is, and ought to provide, the foundational understanding of what it means to participate in this nation. Samuel Adams wrote:

> The liberties of our country, the freedoms of our civil Constitution are worth defending at all hazards; it is our duty to defend them against all attacks. We have received them as a fair inheritance from our worthy ancestors. They purchased them for us with toil and danger and expense of treasure and blood. It will bring a mark of everlasting infamy on the present generation – enlightened as it is – if we should suffer them to be wrested from us by violence without a struggle, or to be cheated out of them by the artifices of designing men.

The *Constitution* reminds us that our continually emerging, perpetually incomplete, task is to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty. Those are essential principles around which to secure the American homeland.

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[18] Mark A. Sauter and James Jay Carafano, *Homeland Security: A Complete Guide to Understanding, Preventing, and Surviving Terrorism* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2005).

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[20] U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *Preparedness Guidelines for Homeland Security* (Washington, DC: Office for Domestic Preparedness, June 2003).

[21] Ian S. Lustick, *Trapped in the War on Terror* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

[22] John Mueller, *Overblown: How Politicians and the Terrorism Industry Inflate National Security Threats, and Why We Believe Them* ( New York, NY: Free Press, 2006). Lustick's and Mueller's point was illustrated recently in Dan Eggen, "Justice Dept. Statistics On Terrorism Faulted; Most Numbers Inaccurate, Audit Shows," *Washington Post*, February 21, 2007, Page A08. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/20/AR2007022001566.html

[23] Brian Michael Jenkins, *Unconquerable Nation: Knowing Our Enemy; Strengthening Ourselves* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2006).

[24] "This Court has gone far toward accepting the doctrine that civil liberty means the removal of all restraints from these crowds and that all local attempts to maintain order are impairments of the liberty of the citizen. The choice is not between order and liberty. It is between liberty with order and anarchy without either. There is danger that, if the Court does not temper its doctrinaire logic with a little practical wisdom, it will convert the constitutional Bill of Rights into a suicide pact." http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=US&vol=337&invol=1 (Terminiello v. City of Chicago). For an analysis of how this phrase has been used see David Corn, "The 'Suicide Pact' Mystery: Who coined the phrase? Justice Goldberg or Justice Jackson?" January 4, 2002, http://www.slate.com/id/2060342/.

[25] http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/assistant/shoe_screening.shtm

[26] In May 2006, 64 million people voted in the American Idol final; in 1984, 54.5 million people – the most ever – voted for Ronald Reagan in the 1984 presidential election. A total of 92.5 million votes were cast in the 1984 election. See "American Idol Outvotes the President," *The Guardian*, May 26, 2006. http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,,1783339,00.

[27] http://english.aljazeera.net/news/archive/archive?ArchiveId=7403